

Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WAKids)

Fast facts about Washington's pilot kindergarten readiness assessment

The Department of Early Learning (DEL), the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and Thrive by Five Washington (Thrive) are working to design and implement a pilot kindergarten readiness assessment for Fall 2010.

We are calling this the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills, or WaKIDS.

Who decides what the process will look like in our state? DEL and OSPI are leading this work in consultation with Thrive. We have convened a team representing a broad array of stakeholders to help inform and design a process for piloting that is culturally appropriate, and links early learning and K-12 educators and parents to help ensure smooth transitions from early learning settings to kindergarten and beyond. Representatives from around the state participating in the decision-making process include:

- School district assessment coordinators
- Child care providers
- Equity specialists
- Early reading and early math specialists
- Child development specialists
- Elementary principals
- Kindergarten teachers

Who will design the pilot kindergarten inventory? We will be issuing a request for proposals in April for an entity to design and train on a kindergarten inventory tool or tools.

Who will use results from this inventory?

- **Teachers, families and caregivers:** how best to support the whole child in the classroom (curriculum, time management, how best to engage parents, best way to facilitate transition to kindergarten).
- **Systems:** how best to engage, welcome and partner with families; and how to coordinate professional development for pre-service teachers and early learning providers.
- **Districts, communities and state:** where to focus future investments (family outreach and engagement strategies, professional development, transition).
- **Early learning providers:** how best to support school-readiness



What will this pilot cost? In the 2009-2011 state operating budget, the Legislature provided \$50,000 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 and \$50,000 in FY 2011 for DEL and OSPI “to identify and test a kindergarten assessment process and tools in geographically diverse school districts.” This state funding depends upon an equal match from a private source. DEL has received a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Thrive to help move this work forward.

What happens after the pilot is done? A report is due to the Legislature and Governor no later than January 15, 2011. They will make decisions about whether and how to move forward with a kindergarten readiness process in our state.

What’s the guiding principle for this work? DEL believes that school readiness is about much more than whether a child is ready. Many people have a role to play in ensuring children enter kindergarten ready to learn.

We believe the kindergarten readiness equation is:

**Ready children + Ready schools +
Ready parents and families + Ready communities**

Who will be part of the pilot? DEL and OSPI are inviting Washington school districts to determine which ones would be interested in voluntary participation in the pilot.



www.del.wa.gov/development/kindergarten/Default.aspx

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